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The LABOUR ORGANISER

**Edited by
H. DRINKWATER**

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LABOUR PARTY LIST OF D.L.P. ALTERATIONS

Index No.	Description	Name of Organisation	Present Secretary and Address
D5	CD	Abingdon D.L.P.	Mr. R. G. ANDREWS, 33, Kynaston Road, Didcot, Berks.
F49	CD	Barnstaple D.L.P.	Mr. I. THOMAS, 5, Richmond Street, Barnstaple, Devon.
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G85	BD	Plaistow D.L.P.	Mr. S. J. WARREN, 431, Barking Road, Plaistow, London, E.13.
D108	SB	Bournemouth D.L.P.	Mrs. E. CULL, 18, Hillbrow Road, Bournemouth, Hants.
B174	BD	Rusholme D.L.P.	Mr. G. B. CHERRY, 449A; Stockport Road, Manchester 12.
B179	SB	Rochdale T.C. & L.P.	Mr. H. WINSTANLEY, Cloth Hall, College Street, Rochdale, Lancs.
E223	BD	Battersea South D.L.P.	Mrs. O. LEETE, 177, Lavender Hill, Battersea, London, S.W.11.
E252	BD	Brixton D.L.P.	Mr. J. WELLS, 85, Dalyell Road, London, S.W.9.
D284	SB	Edmonton B.L.P.	Mr. H. WARD, 372, Fore Street, Edmonton, London, N.9.
D297	CD	Twickenham D.L.P.	Miss M. K. WATSON, 403, London Road, Isleworth, Middlesex.
M337	CD	Wrekin D.L.P.	Coun. J. E. WOOLLAM, J.P., Morris Hall, Church Street, Wellington, Salop.
M416	CD	Kidderminster D.L.P.	Mr. J. N. WINWOOD, 27, Archer Road, Redditch, Worcs.
H494	CD	Aberavon D.L.P.	Ald. W. H. VAUGHAN, Goeswen Ganol, Taibach, Port Talbot, Glam.
H506	CD	Monmouth D.L.P.	Mr. A. E. HOWELLS, 1, G.W.R. Cottage, Abergavenny, Mon.
J537/51	DB	Glasgow B.L.P.	Mr. I. DEAN, Top Flat-Left, 20, Bath Street, Glasgow, C.2.

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Why All These Changes?

The great number of D.L.P. alterations published in our last issue was doubtless a surprise to readers.

This, however, was a three months' list and in some cases the entries applied to a correction of address only.

Nevertheless, if one remembers that the agents, full and part-time, number round about one hundred, and are fairly static the changes in a year among the remaining 400 odd are alarmingly large.

We have before drawn attention to the desirability of retaining experienced officers. We should take a lot of convincing that all or most of these changes were brought about by war conditions.

A Wave of Unsettlement?

Is there not a wave of unsettlement abroad? And are these exits and entrances necessary? A Divisional Secretaryship is a responsible post. Do we do all we can to retain our officers by helping them, appreciating them, and urging them to stay? Perhaps, too, there is something to be said for asking secretaries not to lightly give over. The Party is short of man and woman power. Service in such high office is real profit to the cause. And experience counts much in making the task easier each year. Besides that, are not these alterations very confusing to the public and to Party contacts?

If all these changes are taking place in the D.L.P.s, what of those among

the wards and sections—which are so numerous that we haven't room to print them.

After all, "The little stickit Minister" of long ago set a good example. Local Parties really must get over this constant flutter and flurry. Efforts must be made to stabilise officership. To-day we are crossing the stream. It is unwise to be swopping horses.

Continuity Wanted

Political work is largely dependent on continuity for success. Every change means a minor or a major disturbance of work. We appeal, therefore, both to Parties and to individuals to "chuck it"; by which we mean to chuck "chucking it" and settle down.

As a postscript may we add that changes often mean loss and confusion to others, because they are not promptly notified.

Let it, therefore, be a first duty on every necessarily outgoing secretary and every ingoing secretary, too, to

1. Notify the Head Office of the change, giving full particulars.
2. Notify similarly the "Labour Organiser."

May we add also, for the benefit of Parties taking the "L.O.," that we do not take a notification of change as an instruction to send this journal to a different person. That frequently is not desired; and, if desired, we must be specifically notified.

Whom do we Want in the Party?

"Everybody, of course!" is the unthinking answer many will give to that query.

A little reflection will prove that not to be true. The Labour Party Conference has again and again shown that *certain* people, and people with certain connections, are *not* wanted.

The big Umbrella

Trying again one might answer: "All those who accept the principles and policy of the Labour Party." But surely, some who would affirmatively answer that they accept those principles and policy are excluded because of other connections? "Policy," therefore, must be widely construed and taken to include N.E.C. and Conference opinion and decisions concerning membership of certain bodies. Oppositely, Conference decisions, and some questions of policy are often hotly contested *within* the Party. We do not exclude minorities who want another policy; that is, until and unless they act in some way which may be held to be prejudicial to the whole Party—and not always then. We suffer big minorities on questions of policy, and many little ones, and we suffer, too, wide divergencies as well as small differences on matters of really first-rate importance. Our "umbrella" is historically a large one. It has grown no smaller.

Neither of the answers, therefore, to the question given above quite fit the bill. Experience and knowledge of human nature tells us that no declaration of belief is watertight. One cannot tear out a man's conscience for careful scrutiny. Risks must be taken. Record, behaviour, presumed intentions and general desirability have all to be considered in relation to individuals, even classes of people; nor can we over-stress complete conversion to our policy in the case of the recruit whom we wish to educate and train.

Altogether, this matter of whom we want is worth looking at. But, we submit, we must look at the matter in the light of the Party's fundamental

objects and the service our recruits may give to that end.

And this isn't easy. Every member regards those as the most desirable recruits who conform most nearly to his own ideas. We confess it sorrowfully, but often also he prefers those of his own class, standard of education, or social state.

Please don't contradict. For are not the mass of us proud of calling our Party "The Workers' Party"? Agree to that and our last paragraph stands proved. Deny it, and the foundation of our faith is in challenge.

The fact is that the worker wants the worker; the intellectual the educated; the Fabian the Socialist; the Jewish Socialist the Jew; the lawyer his legal friends; the doctor other medicos; the teacher those interested in his work; the Co-operator the Co-op. man; and so on. They actually form societies to this end. Each and every man (with the exceptions that prove the rule) has an unconscious bias for his class or calling, rank or lack of it, outlook, school, temper, tendencies or testimony. Deep calls to deep, and to ignore this fact is to fail to understand in which way to build or what to build with.

We can, indeed, spend a useful time considering this matter, for it is of great import in making members.

The Scientists' Invasion

As a first example let us take the modern invasion of politics by the scientist. We are not going to examine here the effect this modern phenomenon is going to have on politics (in all Parties) and on our future Government. Great changes are being wrought by this influence in our own times, even before our very eyes. So let us confine ourselves to our subject.

Note the scientist in our ranks to-day. The professors are everywhere! In office, in the House, on the N.E.C., among the candidates, in specialised Socialist societies, in control in others; they are our leaders, teachers

and exponents. Has like attracted like, or can a worker issue forth overnight from his chrysalis, complete in cap and gown? The class has assembled; dons, professors, proctors and students are present—in the Party. It seems to prove our case.

There are also a multitude of lesser lights, writers, bookmen, artists, actors, professional people of all degrees, even social lights, aye, and highlights of night life have not been unknown. Some of these classes we want. Some we don't. But it will pay to examine in this article our reasons.

Incidentally, how is it that the exotics of politics, who always continue to "arrive" in the higher circles, rarely appear in local Party life? True, we often hear of "so-and-so" (always so impressively mentioned), who is a paying member of such-and-such L.L.P. But can this membership, which confers rights and privileges and a standing in politics, be anything but onesided if the Party confers but the insignia and gets no service in return? One wonders sometimes whether Party membership has really involved a change of heart; and whether it shouldn't sometimes involve a change in the mode of living.

The Rich and Middle Classes

The rich man is indeed a problem. Tolstoy was a rich man, and in most respects a fool. Rich men in plenty have espoused the Cause of the Common People—to here say the "Common Cause" would be to perpetrate an economic inaccuracy.

There are quite a lot of rich men in the Labour Party. There are others who have been in it, but no longer serve us. Such men left Labour few happy memories and little lasting good. Was it *because* they were rich? Because, being rich, they sought to buy in Labour's ranks that power which money buys outside it? Or just because it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom, etc., etc.?

It is worth while finding answers to those queries and actually to fit the cap to persons. The answers may prove guides in replying to our main theme. But we must not forget also the many unassuming wealthy persons in the Party, who don't squander their riches, or, if they do, they do it by stealth. Maybe L.L.P.s are not always happy about such persons and regard them as stingy; yet we cannot have our

cake and eat it. Rich men will continue to join our Party, and not for ulterior reasons either. In asking ourselves whom we want we must make up our mind—is it money or the men? If the former we must prepare to pay the price. And God help us!

Then there are the Middle Classes—note the plural. By these we do not mean those affected, aspiring snobs, who, passing rich on from one to a few hundreds a year, seek to impress all and sundry with their social caste—the people who instal a dinner gong, call their dinner a "lanch," talk loudly and from the back of their throat, affect a supercilious manner to real workers (though they themselves are only that), and creep and cringe and crawl to all power, rank and riches.

We mustn't forget we already have such people. They don't let us forget it. But as we are discussing whom we want, we need waste no further words on those we don't want.

It is sometimes said the Labour Party is becoming a middle-class Party. Is it? And what and who are the middle-class regarding whom we must certainly make up our minds?

[A second article continuing this theme will be published in next issue.]

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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Machinery of Elections

LEGISLATION COMING—THE L.O. WINS ITS POINT ON BY-ELECTION PROCEDURE

Mr. Herbert Morrison's long-delayed statement on this subject has now been made. Legislation is to be introduced giving effect to the report of the Committee on Electoral Machinery so far as that report relates to the preparation of a Register of Electors and matters incidental to the holding of a General Election.

Briefly put, there will be prepared an armed forces register to enable members of the forces and merchant seamen to vote either by post or by proxy, and, as regards civilians, each electoral registration officer will be notified through the national registration machinery of the voters residing in his constituency, and kept informed through the same machinery of arrivals and departures. By these means the material for compiling an electoral register for each constituency will be kept continuously up to date.

In view of certain suggestions in the "L.O." regarding the desirability of emergency procedure for the holding of by-elections as well as a General Election (and of the fact that by-elections are not mentioned in the Committee's Report), Mr. Morrison's references to this matter are refreshing—and unexpected. The L.O. registers approval and thanks.

Mr. Morrison said:—

It would not, however, be practicable for the purpose of by-elections occurring during the war to print electoral lists simultaneously as before the war for every constituency throughout the United Kingdom. Such a task would involve a greater diversion of manpower than could be justified under war conditions. The plan contemplated is that when a vacancy occurs the electoral registration officer for that particular constituency shall prepare from the material already supplied to him an electoral list either by a process of typing and multiplying or printing; that the business premises qualifications shall be obtained by claim; that claims and objections shall be dealt with swiftly by the electoral registration officer under a simplified pro-

cedure; and that the list, with such corrections as may be effected in this way, shall become the electoral register for the by-election.

As we have said several times, there is another alternative to the Government's proposals, and that is to do away with a Register of Electors altogether and to rely on National Registration only (plus Food Office area location). That, of course, is too simple and too Utopian, and also too economical and savouring of common-sense to be likely of adoption, though we hope some Labour M.P.s will put up the point.

What matters now is that once the present proposals are on the Statute Book (and how long will Cabinet and Parliament delay?) by-elections will no longer be the fragmentary dog-fights they are to-day. What will be the effects on the Electoral Truce when full tests of the people's opinion *can* be taken? The one solid objection to ending the truce (our own, by the way!) would be gone. Hurry up, Herbert! A new Charter of Liberties awaits your pleasure. Don't keep us waiting.

Regarding Redistribution, a later Parliamentary announcement is to be made. The Government has to decide between the Committee's report (not recommendation) on the possibility of a partial Redistribution, and the Labour minority's wholehearted reservation and objection to such course; also upon the Committee's suggestion that there shall be set up a standing Statutory Commission to deal with Redistribution not for once only, but periodically and as needed.

Labour's reservation to the Committee's Report is flatly against any partial redistribution in wartime, and at any other time apparently; and the Labour representatives also report that they do not believe that a full redistribution of seats is a practical proposition until a re-settlement of the population has taken place. We are entirely with them in their report.

Redistribution of Seats

HESITATION HERE—ARE THE PROPOSALS “VOID FOR UNCERTAINTY?”

The references made by the Home Office Committee on Electoral Machinery to the present “maldistribution” (to quote their own phrase) are of special interest to our readers. We, therefore, quote the following extract:—

“..... the figures show that, by 1939, 119 constituency electorates in Great Britain had ceased to discharge, within acceptable margins of approximation, their function of returning “an equal share of representation in the House of Commons.” Of these, 87 were reduced to a point no longer justifying, according to those criteria, their present representation; while 32 had increased to an extent which required their representation to be doubled or in some cases even trebled or quadrupled. Others had already gone far towards the accepted limits by 1939 without actually reaching them; but by 1941 a number of these had passed those limits. By 1941 the total number of constituency electorates no longer satisfying the standards applied was 164, of which 128 had reached that condition by diminution and 36 by increase.

“The statistics appended disclose extremes of defect and excess of which the following may serve as examples:—

Constituencies with deficient electorates.	Percentage of electorate to quota	
	1939	1941
Southwark, North ..	45	30
Bethnal Green, South West ..	46	32
Bermondsey, West ..	55	32
Bermondsey, Rotherhithe ..	58	35
Bethnal Green, North East ..	56	37
Camberwell, North ..	56	40

Constituencies with excessive electorates.	Percentage of electorate to quota	
	1939	1941
Middlesex, Hendon ..	393	402
Essex, Romford ..	390	388
Middlesex, Harrow ..	317	335
Middlesex, Uxbridge ..	264	302
Surrey, Epsom ..	250	285
Kent, Dartford ..	254	258

“The net position, according to these criteria, can be most simply stated in the following figures. If all the constituency electorates in excess, on the one hand, and in defect, on the other, in 1939, are separately segregated, the former aggregate electorate will be found to return 9 Members of Parliament per million electors, whereas the latter aggregate electorate will be found to return 30 Members per million electors.

“We are not required by our terms of reference to deal with the identification or adjustment of particular instances of maldistribution. But as previously stated (para. 90) it has seemed to us anomalous and unprofitable to labour at improving the registration of the electorates which are to determine the next General Election, if they themselves are such as to produce grossly unequal representation in the House of Commons. We have felt it appropriate, therefore, in connection with our general responsibility for considering the subject of electoral machinery, to draw attention to the present state of constituencies as indicated above; and we think it probable that in the light of the particulars given the Government and the country will take the view that redistribution is essential.

“We doubt, however, whether the full normal programme of redistribution which would ordinarily be called for by so long an interval could be successfully carried out in such a manner as to meet the requirements of the first post-war General Election.”

THE CORPSE

Apropos Strabolgi's statement at Conference re the Party dying on its feet, you will be interested to know that in the course of several house-to-house canvasses in different districts we have in each case made ten to twelve members in the course of an hour or two. Some corpse!—(Extract from a letter from Hendon Constituency L.P.)

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE

SUSPENDING STANDING ORDERS QUESTION.

C.—This correspondent writes saying that a local paper recently criticised the late start and frequent suspension of Standing Orders at Trades Council meetings, the latter motion being moved in order to get over the rule which automatically closes business at 9.30.

Our friend says that they have the same trouble with Party meetings, and the suspension of Standing Orders is often moved to carry on after the proper time for closing. He asks us to deal with this matter and say what we think of it.

ANSWER.

We know the trouble, and these late starts and long drawn-out endings are a national fault, though on public bodies they often do things much better. We have often ourselves objected to late starts and believe they are really a bad habit and not at all necessary. The only remedy is to start to time and keep on doing it. The good result can be seen quite soon, and this course should be ruthlessly pursued.

As to suspension of Standing Orders, one must examine what this means. Standing Orders are the rules under which debate and business is conducted. When suspension of these Orders is carried there really are no further rules under which business can be carried on. Really everything is out of order.

If a person wants to carry on discussion the proper course is to move the suspension of the particular Standing Order which closes discussion and to suspend that rule only. The chairman should refuse to accept any other motion.

There are, of course, special occasions when the suspension of the whole of the Standing Orders may be desirable—to hear a special speaker, for instance. Or there may be other Standing Orders that at times it is desirable to suspend. It is the chairman's duty

to examine such motions very very carefully and to refuse to accept if thought fit.

After all, rules of conduct ought not to be lightly cast aside. They have been laid down in deliberation. They should not be cancelled in haste.

Standing Orders, too, are a protection to the minority. It ought not to be possible at any time to temporarily suspend any Standing Order except with overwhelming consent. The rules ought to stipulate for a two-thirds or three-fourths majority of those voting.

We hope our friend will find some comfort and some course of action arising out of what we have said. We are entirely with him when he objects to attending a meeting which the rules say should close at a certain hour only to find that late comers can carry a motion that makes poppycock of authorised rules and puts people to all sorts of other inconveniences.

KEEPING A JOURNAL

QUESTION.

D.A.—You recently published some articles on account books. With me, I have to pop in and out of the little corner of the club which serves as my office, and cannot possibly keep on handling several books for cash received, or paid out, and other items, so I thought of using a journal as you suggested. Can you tell me what sort of book I should buy? There is a leather-bound book in a stationer's shop close by labelled "Journal," but it is an awful price. I have looked at some other books. How many cash columns should I have in the cash book?

ANSWER.

Our friend is quite right to do as he suggests, and if he keeps a Journal he must enter down in the Dr. column the cash he receives or any bills he

There is no need to go to the expense of a costly book. Lots of stationers will have cheap books in stock of the ruling required. He should look for a book ruled as follows:—

[illegible]

The single column on the right-hand side is for "posting." In this column our friend will enter the page of the cash book or the ledger to which he transfers the items in due course, for it must be remembered that the journal is only a means of keeping a day to day record and all entries must go into the cash book later, while accounts of bills incurred and those that are due to the Party should be entered in the ledger. If they are only a few of them, lists may be kept at the back of the book.

Three column cash books are unlikely to be needed by any except large and important parties with trading concerns. The columns are intended for discount, bank and cash respectively. This is the super cash book, so to speak, and is for business bookkeeping rather than society bookkeeping such as ours.

QUESTION.

ANSWER.

This does not at all mean that every word must be counted. The "matter" has a habit of averaging so many words to the line and to the page. Our correspondent should try a test or two and, with a little practice, he can get his total number of words per line and number of lines per page quite easily. It is not then a long job to total up the number of words he has got in the whole lot of the copy.

The thing now becomes simple. He has got the total number of words and he just wants to know how much they will make. We can tell him:—

Now we have given our friend the key to what his matter will make in solid type. He must leave space for headings.

A little practice along the lines we have given will not go amiss. It will

save our friend a lot of unwanted matter and save the printer a lot of swear words.

WHERE SELF-HELP MAY LEAD TO SALVATION

QUESTION.

R.O.—Dear Drinkwater,—Have you got by you the Sunday dates for next year and for 1945? I want them for a special wheeze I have in mind and I should be everlastingly grateful if you could pop them down for me. I apologise for troubling you.

ANSWER.

Yes. We have got the dates, and we are a little bit surprised that our friend has not got them, too. It shows how much more religious we are than he is.

Please turn to the Book of Common Prayer. Search diligently and ye shall find it; or, at any rate, the way to get on with it. But we'll be hanged if we consider this a job for ourselves. Perhaps our friend has not heard of the book referred to, or studied it.

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Those Village Tours

AND A SUGGESTION

Prior to the war it was quite a custom in certain county divisions which embodied an urban centre to organise summer propaganda tours of the rural areas.

Good work was done, though the method itself implied that much seed was sown by the wayside and on barren ground. Still, there was nearly always response of some sort, and often a local committee was left behind. Our countryside propaganda was a growing effort, and it was, in the bulk, done better and better each year.

Those were the halcyon days of cars. Will they ever return? And though we sometimes thought that a good deal of pleasure was combined with business (at the expense often of other people's petrol) and that tours often covered too much ground as a consequence, we cannot, looking back, deny the health given to our Parties—as

equally to the lucky tourists taking part.

Since the war these things have dropped; necessarily so. Some Parties have been fixing up train and bus tours, again covering too much ground and wasting too much time per diem in transit.

Luckier, or, ought we to say more worthy, Parties have had their cyclists and hikers; which really does supply a bright idea and godly example for others. We really ought to develop those adjuncts of Party-cyclist corps and clubs and hikers' ditto. It's the road to youth and to the youth. A middle-aged Party cannot do these things.

Our plea to-day, however, is for more order and greater objectivity in these things; better organisation.

If seed is to be sown, why not sow it

good and plenty, and not scatter it broadcast, wasting time in travelling from field to field.

In the past it was well argued sometimes that too much time in one place meant less opportunity for the other places of "seeing the candidate"; that "seeing the candidate" being, of course, an age-old specific, like patent medicines, for all ills. Forgive our rudeness if we say that sometimes we have wished we could hide the medicine bottle!

But to-day times are changed. Will the old boy really hike it, straight from Westminster? We really ought to carry out these propaganda tours without our puffing Billy.

And this being so, our point goes home. Select one place and do it well—meeting, literature, canvass, plus a second meeting.

This plan allows for tea, for talk, for results. Another place, another time. And last, but not least, we can cheer up "the results" by promising them the candidate at a future fixed date. And the aforesaid old boy will be lots more impressive, eloquent and satisfied than if he arrived as tourist or a tramp with sweated brow and broken collar. This is sound sense, though as the girl remarked, "Said silly."

There are ten weeks of good weather yet. Ten villages are quite a lot.

L.P. Inventories

List Your Goods NOW

When the blitz was at its height a good deal was said concerning the position of Labour properties, and especially of making inventories of goods in the possession or, or owned by, L.L.P.s.

A good deal was done in this way, especially by Parties in the most visited areas. We suspect, however, that quite a lot of local Parties took no such precautions.

Some recent enquiries show us that it is time to remind secretaries of this matter again. He would be a braggart who would say his town or village is "safe." Therefore, what about that inventory?

There have been lots of changes among D.L.P. secretaries. There have

probably been changes also in the quantity or type of goods owned, as well as in the place where these are kept.

Are the inventories up-to-date? Are they duplicated and safely put away? This should be seen to at once.

From statements of account received we note, too, that some Parties pay war damage insurances. The others should see to this. The rate is much less than formerly, but it may be unfortunate if the goods are not insured.

The above two reminders are, we are sure, from personal knowledge, necessary. We hope the hint will not go unheeded.

BIRMINGHAM YEAR BOOK

The Annual Report and Year Book of the Birmingham Trades Council and Borough Labour Party is to hand. We have looked forward to perusing this fine publication for more years than we can remember. As this powerful Movement grows, the Year Book grows too, and its 80 pages, 'twixt a good cover, unfold a picture of teeming Labour life.

The compiler is, at least, to be congratulated on his work. One wonders if the other, and the predominant Party, in a somewhat sordid city (largely due to that Party) realises the steady building, the workers' work, and, not least, the workers' hopes, of which these things bespeak volumes.

The Birmingham Movement has an impressive personnel. A scamper through the Year Book's pages reveals that.

And though some information has had to be curtailed owing to war conditions, the Year Book remains a Labour "Who's Who" for a city of a million inhabitants, more than half of whom would, we believe, vote Labour to-morrow. Because of this a Birmingham Labour Year Book becomes almost a national publication.

The Secretary of the Trades Council is our old friend Charlie Spragg (Councillor C. J. Spragg, J.P., 262, Corporation Street, Birmingham 4). The Borough Party Secretary is now Jim Simmons (also a Councillor), 25a, Paradise Street, Birmingham 1. Copies of the report, costing 1/-, may be obtained from either.

WALL-NEWSPAPERS

A WAR DEVELOPMENT—AND AN IDEA FOR LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES

Many Local Parties rightly congratulate themselves on the enterprise and ingenuity shown in the production, under difficulties, of a duplicated news-sheet. Some of these have been well got-up, and well-thought-out models of what a tiny newspaper should be, complete with titled pages and articles, magazine features, illustrations and comic strips, attractive make-up, neatly displayed adverts. and the rest.

These things many people thought must have been the embryo of the modern press. True that's how the "Labour Organiser," and others, started, but the single *printed* sheet was the real precursor of modern journalism.

Nothing New Under the Sun

But long before printing began the wall-newspaper, now being revived in war factories as a "house organ," had its day. The first printed newspaper arrived in China about 382 A.D. But before that the Romans had their "Acta Diurna," which was publicly displayed and produced during a few hundred years. "Acta Diurna" was indeed a wall-newspaper. There is nothing new under the sun. Mayhap the paintings on the caverns of Spain done by the Pro-Magnons were newspapers! They certainly told a tale (which we cannot read) and were illustrated by the life of their times.

It is interesting, therefore, to note how the wall-newspaper is being developed as an aid or incentive to production all over the country. The factory newspaper has come to stay, and the present wall sheets are "news-papers" in every essential. The single sheet, or as we understand, extra copies of it, are posted in prominent places for all to read. Unlike factory notices, the wall-newspaper is a record of doings, with articles, reports, ideas, letters, photographs, cartoons, competitions, etc., and matter typed and pasted into columns with all the ingenuity that an enterprising and imitative editor can conjure. There are "editorial boards," too, and a censorship to boot.

Perhaps our readers didn't know all this was being done. It is one of war's surprises, and an amazing degree of excellence is being achieved. There is no doubt these wall-newspapers are accomplishing their purpose and that they are a virile influence in an age where the eye is the principal machine for enlightenment and education.

We wonder how many of our readers have tried their hand at this game. There are certainly possibilities both within and without many Labour centres, offices and clubs.

We foresee that after the war the wall-newspaper will remain as an influence to be counted with. It is cheap, tremendously effective, and lends itself, more even than a duplicated or printed journal, to co-operative effort.

Will some enterprising Labour Secretary make a start and send in the first copy when done with? Suggestions and improvements may result.

We have here an instrument yet untouched—a new weapon we must forge and learn to use and develop. Paper shortage may yet result in big blessings. Who is the secretary or agent who will make the start?

A Sample: if a Poor One

Here are one or two suggestions for a Local Party's first wall-newspaper, timed, of course, for to-day:

1. Reference to L.P. Conference —typed, not more than 200 words.
2. Give total of N.L.P. membership —written in.
3. Humorous cartoon from "Daily Herald" or "Plebs," *with acknowledgment*—pasted on.
4. Reference to Local Town Councillors' work—typed, not more than 200 words.
5. Reference to some local problem. —typed, more than 200 words.
6. Group photo (if possible) of local leaders: original is best if protected from weather.
7. Announcement of coming events —don't overload.

8. A letter to the Editor on some subject of present interest—typed and conveying a local improvement suggestion.

9. Another cartoon, with acknowledgment. Alternatively a free guessing competition.

10. Brief cut-out article (if you can find one) from current Labour literature—cut out, paste up in readable form.

11. Short reference to local membership—typed.

12. List of local secretaries—typed.

13. Humorous strip with a Labour moral—see "Forward."

14. Note in support of No. 7. Short biography of speaker is suitable.

There now are 14 points. Remember the sheet may be any size—a royal board will do, used upright. The title is best printed in suitable type. A little thought when the matter is collected will probably allow of the division of the board into equal spaces. This is far better than an attempt to title the items, or columnise as in an orthodox newspaper. Remember this is a newspaper, but in original form.

WEST RENFREW

From West Renfrew D.L.P. we learn that "the declaration of War coming in the midst of a Loudspeaker Van campaign caused a number of meetings to be cancelled and necessitated a "strategical withdrawal to reorganise our forces." This, while not yet completed, is well advanced, and an "offensive has already begun with an attack on a Tory stronghold which has been completely successful," "resulting in a Party being formed in Brookfield, a very residential quarter in West Renfrew.

"Fresh forces are gathered for an assault on another stronghold of the enemy in Ranfurly, and given the material from Transport House, we are confident of compelling them to retreat before our advance. A flanking move from Gourcock might make the retreat a rout."

How these military phrases seem to fit in with William Morris' ideas of the march of the workers! Except that we have learnt a few since Morris days. On, West Renfrew, on!

LET THESE CONSCRIPTS VOTE!

One of the amazing things about the discussions that have been taking place for the last year or two regarding plans for the next general election is that no Party, no Minister, and no person, so far as we are aware, has raised the question of the assimilation of voting age with the conscription age, as was done in the last war, when naval and military voters became qualified at nineteen.

This appalling disregard for justice seems to us one of the most sinister signs of the times. So we're got these kids—have we?—boys and girls this time, with industrial conscription as well as military service. And they are our slaves, sans citizen rights, sans a voice in the war or in the peace, sans responsibility for it all!

Their's but to do and die; their's not to reason why; their's but to suck in the promises of a grand new world which they shall not have a part in shaping! Their's but to shed their blood for it, or, if they survive, come back and pay the bill—and Heaven

knows what the burden will amount to.

Yes, the shame of this lack of appreciation appals us. We shudder at heathen sales of sons and daughters. But these, at least, knew no better world. But Britain sells its sons and its daughters to Mars and to Mammon, and the youthful conscripts have the shame of knowing that their fathers are not half so grateful as their grandfathers were to *their* sons, and as far back at 1917.

It is time this thing was ventilated. Where are Labour's past professions? Who and what stands in the way of justice?

The conscription age is down to eighteen. That is the age we ought to enfranchise. Eighteen has as much discernment as eighty, for having passed our children through the fire to Moloch do we still assume they know nothing?

We hope our cry will be taken up. The present indifference is a gross injustice and a reflection on ourselves.

A Problem in Divided Boroughs

HOW TO GET DELEGATES FOR D.L.P.'s

Our old friend Herbert Eastwood, whose name is a household word in many parts of Lancashire, writes:—

For many years as Labour Organiser and Election Agent I have had my share of problems, but, like many others, I have generally managed to find an answer to them. Now that I have turned respectable in the eyes of political opponents and become a Trade Union General Secretary, I am up against a problem I have not had occasion to handle before. Others may have the same problem, and I make the suggestion that they contribute their ideas with a view to mutual assistance. The position is this.

The Labour Agent for the Division I am concerned about has been given leave of absence for the duration of the war owing to change of occupation and I have been selected as the Honorary Agent of the Divisional Labour Party. Here is my problem. My Divisional Party is in Manchester, consequently there are no Trade Union affiliations as these are made to the Borough Labour Party. But, according to the Labour Party Constitution, such affiliated branches are entitled to representation on the Divisional Party.

With ten divisions similarly situated it means that the Secretary of the Borough Labour Party is asked to supply a list of affiliated Trade Union Branch Secretaries to each of them. But he, too, is a voluntary secretary, and this means real work.

It is obviously important that all Trade Unions with local political affiliations should have full representation on Divisional Parties where they have members in the constituency. A striking illustration of this fact was shown recently where a Labour Member of Parliament died. When it came to the selection of a candidate from several submitted, there was not a single Trade Union representative on the committee. This position obviously restricts the rights of the Trade Unions.

I have been able to secure the names and addresses of some branches of Trade Unions and have been able to pay them a visit. Following every visit I have been able to secure a collector from the branch and some in-

dividual members. That is all to the good. Yet Trade Union representation is still desired. Perhaps some agent with experience of this difficulty will supply his ideas in connection with it. Or, perhaps the Editor, out of his wide experience, will spare a little of his valuable time to deal with the matter. I hope so.

OUR ANSWER

The problem presented by our old friend is not easy. Nor is the Editor's experience of much avail here. True, the Editor has been Divisional Secretary in four Divisions, once in similar circumstances to our correspondent.

But that was 36 years ago and the problem was solved by setting up a separate L.R.C. and seeking direct affiliations. That would never do to-day, and was only justified then by success. Indeed, that organisation gave Joseph Chamberlain his first big jolt. It beat one of his nominees.

May we digress here to say Neville was a nice boy then, really progressive and broadminded, with just a kink of Socialism—like Joe had once. Neville sent your Editor £5 towards a town planning campaign! One or two of us had hopes of Neville. How history might have altered had that hope been fulfilled!

We have made enquiries in order to answer our friend's invitation. As we suspected, Manchester isn't much worse off in the direction he mentions than other great cities.

There is a serious weakness in Party organisation here. Local affiliations, like national ones, are bulk affairs, and the task of obtaining names and addresses of the members is a stupendous one; so would be the allocation, and it seems to be nobody's business.

Once in Birmingham, we believe, 30,000 addresses of affiliated and non-affiliated Trade Unionists were collected—or were they? But no one man can handle that task. It's too big.

To-day and everywhere we work by rule of thumb. In most places the Central Party encourages and invites its affiliated organisations to send in not only a list of central delegates but a list of local ones. That works with enthusiasts but by no means works with most. There are other objections, but it does result in *some* representa-

tion, and we think the case mentioned of there being no T.U. delegates at all is exceptional.

In some cases D.L.P. secretaries take an initiative, as our friend has done, and approaches are made to branches, not for affiliations; but for the exercise of the right of representation conferred by rule.

We should be glad to hear of some successes, or of other methods. Card records of T.U. members do exist in Trade Union head offices. Some of the great industrial funds of the Trade Unions could be well spent in duplication and distribution of these records. This is one of those matters on which much and continued representation ought to be made. We hope that the consultations Head Office officials hold from time to time with Trade Union executives afford some opportunity for the ventilation of urgent local problems like this.

THE ELECTORAL PROPOSALS

We are indebted to the Labour Press Service for the following summary of these proposals as contained in the speech of Mr. Herbert Morrison:—

It is estimated that at the end of 1941 there were five million adult civilians living elsewhere than in the constituencies in which they were resident in 1939; roughly one-sixth of the total electorate.

In addition to this there was the large scale mobilisation for the Armed Forces. The movement of population has increased since 1941.

After the armistice there will be a counter-movement of population, but the Committee found that its timing and direction were quite unpredictable.

They, therefore, recommend a plan for improved methods and machinery by which the risk of disfranchisement owing to heavy population movement might be minimised.

For civilians there will be continuous registration. Each electoral registration officer will be notified, through the machinery of the National Register, of the people residing in his constituency, and he will be kept informed through the same machinery of particulars for necessary modifications due to arrivals, departures, new registrations, attainment of adult age and deaths.

Such a system will secure that no elector is removed from the register of any constituency until entered upon the register of another.

This continuously changing register will be frozen when notice of a Parliamentary election is given.

It is suggested that the qualifying residence period should be two months.

The proposals for the registration of members of the Armed Forces follow the existing law that each member of the Armed Forces is entitled to be registered for the address at which he would, but for his service, be resident.

Electorates so registered are placed upon the absent voters' list.

Members serving with the Home Forces will be able to vote by post; those serving overseas will be able to vote by proxy.

Each member of the Armed Forces will make on a card a declaration of his address, and men overseas already will, if possible, appoint a proxy. The completion of these cards will be obtained from members of the Forces, at home or overseas, through their unit.

The cards will be sent to the electoral registration officers of the areas in which the addresses are respectively situated.

Seamen in the British Merchant Navy will be dealt with in the same way as the Armed Forces overseas; that is to say, they will vote by proxy.

It will not be practicable, for the purposes of by-elections occurring during the war, to print electoral lists simultaneously, as before the war, for every constituency throughout the United Kingdom.

Such a task would involve a greater diversion of man-power than can be justified under war conditions.

The plan contemplated is that when a vacancy occurs the electoral registration officer for that particular constituency shall prepare from the material already supplied to him a register either by a process of typing and multigraphing or printing.

A business premises qualification will be obtained by claim.

Claims and objections will be dealt with swiftly by the electoral registration officer under a simplified procedure.

The list, with such corrections as may be effected in this way, will become the electoral register for the by-election.

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